

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 OIC-02 TRSE-00 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06
OMB-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 IOE-00 /087 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4023

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AND LINSENMAYER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, ILO

SUBJ: ILO: MEETING OF GOVERNMENT GROUP ON STRUCTURE,
NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 3

REF: GENEVA 9490

1. SUMMARY: THE MEETING PRODUCED THE GROUP OF 77 PRO-
POSAL REPORTED PARA TWO REFTEL AND AGREEMENT (IN CHAIRMAN'S
REPORT) TO CONTINUE THE DISCUSSION IN FEBRUARY. TEXT OF
THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT WILL BE SENT SEPTTEL; NOTEWORTHY
IN HIS REPORT WAS 77 STATEMENT THAT IF COMPROMISE ON
ARTICLES 7 AND 36 OF ILO CONCLILINOT POSSIBLE
IN FEBRUARY, "THEY SHOULD SEEK OTHER MEANS TO SECURE
REVISION". ALSO OF INTEREST IS FACT THAT NEW ZEALAND
DECLINED TO REITERATE IN CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ITS ACCEPTANCE
IN RESTRICTED GROUP (PARA 14 BELOW) OF G-77 PROPOSAL
AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. NOTEWORTHY AT MEETING WERE
(1) NEGATIVE REACTION OF THE EUROPEANS (UK, ITALY AND
BELGIUM) TO THE G-77 PROPOSAL AND THEIR DESIRE TO INTRO-
DUCE A COUNTERPROPOSAL IN FEBUARY; (2) THE FACT THAT THE 77
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WERE NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE SPECIFICS OF THEIR

PROPOSAL (SUGGESTING THEY ARE NOT AGREED ON ITS IMPLEMENTATION); (3) LACK OF INTEREST BY G-77 IN ACCOMMODATING EASTERN EUROPEAN DESIRE TO MODIFY THE STRUCTURE OF THE EMPLOYER AND WORKING GROUPS; AND (4) LACK OF SUPPORT FOR SCANDINAVIAN POSITION THAT ALL SEATS IN THE GOVERNMENT GROUP OF THE GB SHOULD BE ELECTIVE. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN SUBJECT MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FIRST PLENARY GROUP MEETINGS DID LITTLE MORE THAN TO AGREE THAT AGENDA ITEMS WERE ARTICLES 7 AND 36, AND TO FORM A "RESTRICTED" GROUP WHICH MIGHT MAKE BETTER PROGRESS BECAUSE OF ITS LIMITED SIZE AND INFORMAL CHARACTER (I.E., NO SECRETARIAT). AS IT DEVELOPED, GROUP OF 77 INSISTED ON THREE TITULAR MEMBERS EACH FROM THE 77 AND THE WESTERN INDUSTRIALIZED MEMBERS, PLUS THREE DEPUTIES. WHEN IT WAS REALIZED THAT NO ACCOMMODATION HAD BEEN MADE FOR THE EASTERN EUROPEANS, G-77 VOLUNTEERED TO RETAIN THE RESTRICTED TITLE AND TO LEAVE THE GROUP "OPEN-ENDED". ON MOST OCCASIONS, THE RESTRICTED, OPEN-ENDED GROUP NUMBERED SIXTEEN TO EIGHTEEN; THUS IN PRACTICE, IT WAS NOT RESTRICTED AT ALL.

3. EARLY IMEC GROUP MEETINGS CONCLUDED THAT ARTICLES 7 AND 36 WOULD BE THE ONLY TWO ITEMS FOR DISCUSSIONS; THAT THE 10 INDUSTRIAL SEATS COULD NOT BE ELIMINATED AND THAT THE SIZE OF THE GB WOULD BE KEPT THE SAME, SO FAR AS POSSIBLE. WHILE G-77 MADE FREQUENT REFERENCE TO CONTINUITY OF THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION, IMEC REPS STRESSED CONTINUITY OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE GOVERNING BODY. IMEC AGREED TO LET THE 77 TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN DISCUSSING ARTICLE 7 WHICH MEANT USING THE ASIAN PROPOSAL AS A BASIS OF DISCUSSION.

4. AT THE SECOND PLENARY SESSION, THE G-77 INSISTED ON:

(A) ABOLITION OF NON-ELECTIVE SEATS;

(B) PRESERVING "CONTINUITY OF WORK";

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(C) THE COMPOSITION OF EACH REGIONAL GROUP AS A MATTER FOR EACH REGION TO DECIDE.

FROM THIS POINT ON, THE ASIAN PROPOSAL RECEIVED LESS ATTENTION AND DISCUSSION CENTERED ON THE G-77 PROPOSAL.

5. THE THREE EASTERN EUROPEANS INSISTED THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO NON-GOVERNMENT GROUPS BUT NO SUPPORT

EMERGED FOR THEIR POSITION.

6. BY THE TIME THE "AMERICAS GROUP" MET, THERE APPEARED TO BE LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A NEWLY EMERGING PROPOSAL WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, PROVIDED FOR A MINIMUM OF TWO SEATS PER REGION FOR THE INDUSTRIAL MEMBEERS AND THE BASICS OF ARTICLE 7 IN ITS PRESENT FORM. MEXICO AND VENEZUELA ADMITTED THAT THE PRACTICAL RESULTS WOULD BE NEARLY THE SAME BUT THAT "ELECTING" THE TWO OR MORE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES PER REGION SATISFIED THE PRINCIPLE OF ABOLISHING NON-ELECTIVE SEATS. DURING DISCUSSIONS IN THE AMERICAS GROUP, IT WAS ENTIRELY CLEAR THAT THE ABOVE REPRESENTATIVES WERE FREE-WHEELING AND AS MANY TIMES AS NOT, THEY DID NOT AGREE WITH EACH OTHER. MEXICO (LOMBERA) INSISTED THAT CANADA AND THE U.S. WOULD BE ASSURED OF A REGULAR SEAT THROUGH "AN ARRANGEMENT" OF TWO INDUSTRIALS PER REGION FOR CONTINUOUS REPRESENTATION.

7. AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT SEEMED THAT A NUMBER OF THE 77 WERE SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING:

(A) ALL SEATS WOULD BE ELECTIVE;

(B) CONTINUITY WOULD BE ASSURED THROUGH REGULAR REPRESENTATION OF INDUSTRIALIZED MEMBERS;

(C) EACH REGION WOULD DECIDE ON THE CHOICE OF MEMBERS EXCEPT THAT A MINIMUM OF TWO INDUSTRIALS WOULD BE CHOSEN FROM A LIST PREPARED BY THE OFFICE USING THE EXISTING CRITERIA FOR RANKING INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES;

(D) THE DISTINCTION OF TITULAR AND DEPUTY SEATS WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE MAINTAINED;

(E) DETAILS WOULD NOT BE SPELLED OUT IN THE CONSTITUTION ON STANDING ORDERS, BUT RATHER IN "REGIONAL AGREEMENTS";

(F) A "MODEST" INCREASE IN THE GB SIZE WOULD BE ESSENTIAL;

(G) THERE SEEMED TO BE AGREEMENT IN THE 77 THAT A SPECIAL PARAGRAPH IN THE CONSTITUTION WOULD PROVIDE SAFEGUARDS FOR THE AUTONOMY OF THE NON-GOVERNMENT GROUPS. SHORTLY AFTERWARD, THE G-77 PRODUCED THE PAPER REPORTED IN PARA TWO OF REFTEL.

8. CONTINUED DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AMERICAS HIGHLIGHTED

THE FACT THE PROPOSAL DID HAVE SOME FLAWS. THE MEXICAN REPRESENTATIVE NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT WHILE HE FORESAW NO PROBLEMS ACCOMMODATING THE INDUSTRIAL MEMBERS OF NORTH AMERICA, EUROPE DID HAVE "SPECIAL PROBLEMS" BUT IF THEY SAW FIT, THEY COULD HAVE FOUR OR FIVE SEATS ASSIGNED ON A "PERMANENT BASIS". AT THIS POINT, HE RECOMMENDED A MINIMUM OF FOUR SEATS FOR INDUSTRIALS IN THE AMERICAS.

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OMB-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 IOE-00 /087 W
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9. AT ONE OF THE IMEC MEETINGS, AGO INTRODUCED A NEW PROPOSAL WHICH HAD A MIXTURE OF EC NINE SUPPORT. IT WAS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) THE NUMBER IN THE GB WOULD REMAIN THE SAME;

(B) DEPUTY SEATS WOULD BE RAISED TO TITULAR IN THE GOVT. GROUP;

(C) THE PRESENT REGIONAL LINE-UP WOULD REMAIN WITHOUT CHANGE;

(D) ONE-HALF THE GOVERNMENT SEATS WOULD BE FOR THE

"MOST DEVELOPED" COUNTRIES AND CRITERIA WOULD BE THE SAME FOR ALL REGIONS;

(E) SLATE WOULD BE PUT TO CONFERENCE FOR YES OR NO APPROVAL; IF CONFERENCE DID NOT APPROVE THE SLATE, THE INCUMBENT GB WOULD CONTINUE;

(F) NON-GOVERNMENT GROUPS WOULD ELECT ON A GLOBAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BASIS USING THEIR OWN CRITERIA;

(G) VOTES OF WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS WOULD BE WEIGHTED TO EQUAL GOVERNMENT GROUP.

10. AFTER SEVERAL MEETINGS, INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT (BY U.S., CANADA AND JAPAN) PRECLUDED PASSING THE AGO PROPOSAL TO THE RESTRICTED GROUP FOR ITS CONSIDERATION, SEVERAL IMEC MEMBERS THOUGHT THAT IMEC'S STRENGTH WOULD BE WEAKENED BY GIVING ALL GOVERNMENT SEATS TITULAR STATUS. THE COUNTER ARGUMENT WAS THAT VOTING PRIVILEGES WOULD GIVE MEMBERS A MORE RESPONSIBLE ROLE; AND THEY WOULD BE MORE INDEPENDENT AND INCLINED TO SIDE WITH IMEC IN CRITICAL ISSUES.

11. AT TIMES, WHEN NEITHER THE ASIAN NOR THE 77 PROPOSAL SEEMED TO GAIN SUPPORT, REFERENCE WAS MADE TO THE AGO PROPOSAL OF 1975. HOWEVER, THE GROUP SHOWED LITTLE INTEREST AND NO DISCUSSION EVOLVED.

12. DURING THE CLOSING HOURS OF THE RESTRICTED GROUP DISCUSSION, FRICTION DEVELOPED AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE 77 HAD ADEQUATELY EXPLAINED THEIR PROPOSAL, I.E., THAT THE IMEC QUESTIONS HAD NOT BEEN ANSWERED. MOREOVER, AGO STATED THAT THE 77 PROPOSAL WOULD NOT SERVE AS AN ADEQUATE BASIS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION. HE FELT THE PROPOSAL SHOULD OFFER ATTRACTIONS BUT, INSTEAD, IT HAD DRAWBACKS. THE INDUSTRIALS SEEMED TO THINK THE G-77 WOULD ANSWER QUESTIONS IN WRITING; THE 77 COUNTERED BY SAYING THAT (1) WRITTEN ANSWERS WERE NOT NECESSARY; AND (2) INDUSTRIALS HAD PROMISED A PROPOSAL.

13. DURING THIS DEBATE, THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH THE 77 PROPOSAL. NEW ZEALAND CONSIDERED THAT THE 77 PARALLELED THE ASIAN PROPOSAL TO WHICH THEY HAD BEEN A PARTY.

14. EMOTIONS HEIGHTENED TO THE POINT WHERE THE 77 SPOKESMAN (LOMBERA) INSISTED ON: A WRITTEN RECORD OF 77'S PROPOSAL AND EXPLANATIONS; A WRITTEN RECORD THAT NO REPLY

FROM THE IMEC WAS GIVEN; HEARING A COUNTER-PROPOSAL IN
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PLENARY AND NOT IN CORRIDORS; CONTINUING IN FEBRUARY
WITH "TWO VOICES" (I.E., IMEC AND G-77). IF THESE CON-
DITIONS WERE NOT MET, LOMBERA SAID G-77 WILL SEEK
"ANOTHER CHANNEL" TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS. ADDITIONAL
OBSERVATIONS EVENTUALLY LED TO THE DECISION THAT
THE CHAIRMAN WOULD DRAFT A SET OF CONCLUSIONS WITH THE
HELP OF "FRIENDS OF THE CHAIRMAN". HE INTENDED TO
INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- 1) THE ASIAN PROPOSAL WAS EXAMINED;
- 2) THE 77 OFFERED A PROPOSAL;
- 3) THE 77 PROPOSAL WAS DISCUSSED WITH QUESTIONS AND
ANSWERS;
- 4) NO COUNTER-PROPOSAL CAME FROM IMEC, ALTHOUGH REACTIONS
TO THE 77 PROPOSAL WERE HEARD;
- 5) SOME MEMBERS APART FROM THE G-77 (EASTERN EUROPEANS
AND NEW ZEALAND) FELT G-77 PROPOSAL SERVES AS A BASIS
FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION;
- 6) FURTHER STUDY WAS REQUIRED AT WHICH TIME OTHER PRO-
POSALS MIGHT BE EXPLORED;
- 7) THE FEBRUARY 1977 MEETING WOULD BE CONSIDERED AN
APPENDAGE TO THIS SESSION;
- 8) NUMEROUS MEETINGS HAD BEEN HELD DURING THE TWO
WEEK PERIOD IN AN EFFORT TO REACH A SATISFACTORY
CONCLUSION;
- 9) THE ATTACHMENTS TO THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT WOULD BE:
 - (A) ASIAN PROPOSAL
 - (B) 77 PROPOSAL
 - (C) CONCLUSIONS.CATTO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976GENEVA09690
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760450-0642
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761270/aaaacisk.tel
Line Count: 323
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 GENEVA 9490
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <07 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ILO: MEETING OF GOVERNMENT GROUP ON STRUCTURE, NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 3
TAGS: ELAB, ILO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006